(b) if so, the details thereof and by when this scheme will be implemented?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) In the meeting of Council of Board of School Education (COBSE) held on 1st May, 2005, a decision was taken to recommend to the boards of education a scheme to introduce grades up to class X. A final decision has not yet been taken by CBSE. So far as CBSE is concerned, the Board is proposing to introduce a grading system, which envisages issue of subject wise grades without any reference to marks.

(b) Does not arise.

Reservation for OBCs in Kendriya/Navodaya Vidyalayas

698. SHRI S.S. CHANDRAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is fact that OBC students are not given reservation in the Kendriya and Navodaya Vidyalaya;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor; and

(c) whether Government would take steps to provide reservation for such students belonging to OBC in view of their backwardness?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Reservation for OBC in school admission has not been provided for in the guidelines approved either by the Board of Governors of the Kendriya Vidyalaya Sangathan or by the Executive Committee of the Navodaya Vidyalaya Samiti.

(c) In view of (b), question does not arise.

Urdu schools

699. SHRI TARIQ ANWAR: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the Urdu schools in several States are in dilapidated condition;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) whether the amount provided by the civic bodies is not utilized in right way; and

(d) if so, the remedial steps taken by Government?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) to (d) The medium of instruction in schools is decided by the respective State Governments. No information is maintained centrally on the condition of schools giving instruction in various languages.

Enrolment and retention in primary schools

700. SHRI PYARIMOHAN MOHAPATRA: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the new initiatives taken and/or contemplated by the UPA Government for achievement of 100 per cent enrolment and retention in primary schools as well as for attainment of total literacy; and

(b) whether such initiatives have been taken into account the past failures since the New Education Policy 1986 came into operation as well as the fact that cheper options adopted in the past in the context of constraints of resources have aggravated the problem?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI MD. ALI ASHRAF FATMI): (a) and (b) The Government of India has given high priority to achieving universal elementary education in India through the following measures:

1. Levying of an Education Cess @ 2% on Direct and Indirect Central taxes to augment resources for the universalization of elementary education, especially for the Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) and the Mid-day Meal (MDM) schemes.
2. In the year 2005-06, the Plan allocation for Elementary Education and Literacy has gone up to Rs. 12531.76 crores, which is an increase of about 109% over the Plan allocation of 2004-05.
3. The Government of India has revamped the Mid-day Meal scheme with effect from September, 2004 to provide cooked mid-day meals to children in the age group 6-11 years.